‘Just knowledge’: Can social work’s ‘guilty knowledge’ help build a more inclusive knowledge society?

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Abstract

In contemporary societies, the value and importance of knowledge is increasingly tied to its potential to generate profit. This raises questions about whether and how knowledge can, at the same time, be harnessed and valued for its capacity to advance social justice. In this paper we consider these questions in relation to social work knowledge and academic research utilisation, setting our analysis in the context of broader debates on these themes. As well as highlighting the risks that the ‘knowledge economy’ poses to certain currents of knowledge (currents within social work and analogous currents in other fields), we ask what might be done to protect and realise the value of these currents. We suggest that the example of social work usefully illuminates both the potential and challenges of knowledge utilisation for social justice more broadly.

Keywords: Higher Education, Knowledge Economy, Knowledge Production, Knowledge Utilisation, Social Justice

Introduction

> Social work knowledge is formed from the humble stuff of lived experience and values …Hidden beneath the trappings of scientific respectability and social approval are the heartlines of the profession. These lines have existed from the beginning and have remained strong within the recesses of daily practice. Like veins of ore in bedrock, they glimmer quietly for all who are willing to see (Weick, 1999).

Many social and policy discourses are now framed by neoliberalism such that market perspectives and norms operate in all domains of life including university life (Frodeman, 2017). Higher education has become substantially shaped or inflected by neoliberal versions of the knowledge economy, which

stress the possible marketability of particular kinds of 'knowledge product', especially those that translate into tangible outcomes and enable both universities as 'producers' and corresponding 'user' organisations to gain a 'competitive advantage' (Brennan and McGowan, 2006, p. 145). This market orientation, combined with lower rates of public spending on higher education in many OECD countries including Australia, Japan and the UK (OECD, 2018), is prompting universities to become 'knowledge businesses', expressly packaging, branding and selling knowledge as a commodity (Gaventa and Bivens, 2014, p. 151).

Understandably, pressures towards knowledge commodification in the contemporary HE landscape give rise to anxieties for many of those who see universities as vitally important broadly-based social institutions. There are practical and ethical concerns that profit incentives may ever more frequently override social, intellectual, and cultural agendas (Brint, 2001; Scott, 2009). Lying behind these concerns there are also fundamental epistemological worries that economistic discourses have pervasive and powerful reductionist effects – making it more difficult to 'see', let alone respond to, what really matters. Barry (2000), for example, argues that the narrow lens of economic reasoning, which reduces 'all values into economic costs and benefits' (p. 143), is particularly unsuited to the holistic integrated approach 'needed to deal with most social ... problems' (p. 143). Most generally there is a fear that universities are being 'hollowed out' such that their historically distinctive patterns of contribution to society are simply lost as their norms and practices converge with those of countless other profit-based institutions (Cribb and Gewirtz, 2013).

In what follows we will acknowledge the bases and importance of these critical anxieties but also seek to move beyond negative and sceptical readings of contemporary HE by attending to some of the less commodified and more diverse, forms of 'valuable knowledge' available in universities. We will do so by using social work knowledge as a focus. This focus, we suggest, provides a way of opening up discussion about conceptions of knowledge utilisation that are directed by social justice considerations, and allied to this a tentative vision of a more inclusive conception of a knowledge

economy, or perhaps a knowledge society (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation; UNESCO, 2005).

Social work's 'guilty knowledge'

In 1999, Ann Weick provided a heartfelt and vibrant description of social work's deep and expansive knowledge of human experience; a knowledge 'learned through an intimate connection with people's lives' (p. 35). She claimed that, what we know in social work flows from our grounding in human experience and our sense of social justice. Sadly, she noted, 'this colourful, passionate, emotion-filled' knowledge 'is not the official coin of the realm, and so it forms the guilty knowledge of social work' (p. 35). Today, almost two decades later, Weick's words could not hold more relevance. For, although knowledge has indeed become the coin of the realm, the coin that is recognised within the 'research economy' of the university tends to be from a different mint. Indeed the latter is frequently ''owned' by elite professionals, who may often fail to value the lived experience of ordinary lives' (Morley and Ife, 2002, p. 72). For Weick (1999), guilty knowledge is precious –it 'glimmers' with value, but it also sits at the edge of the dominant knowledge paradigm, insistently challenging institutional assumptions about the nature of valuable knowledge

Weick's 'guilty knowledge' resists being abstracted into neatly packaged products because it is 'emotion-filled' and also because it is an extension of relationship and dialogue. Such valuable currents of knowledge might be said to reflect a 'service logic' rather than a 'product logic' (Osborne et al, 2016) – in that there is no easy way of separating out the 'valuable knowledge' from the relationships and value commitments from which it arises and in which it is embedded. Of course social work is not unique in harbouring forms of knowledge – such as the embodied knowledge of practice, activism or care – that seem to defy or resist commodification into profit-oriented knowledge products. There are strongly analogous currents of knowledge within the fields of education, nursing, youth work and many other areas of applied social sciences and humanities.

We have featured Weick's account because it suggests a counterbalance to the market-oriented focus of the knowledge economy and, we believe, contains clues for envisioning broader social justice oriented models of knowledge utilisation. It is also a reminder of the rich knowledge ecology of the university and the ways in which university knowledge production and use is also linked to the civic, socially critical and educative missions of universities and not simply high-status research processes (and thus, of course, a reminder of the importance of not severing research from these other missions).

Thus even if we were to start from a 'productionist' lens we should be asking how we can make effective and efficient use of all the 'epistemic resources' of the university. How, for example, can we best mine the precious ore of social work knowledge? In the remainder of the paper we will open up this question further. In so doing we will follow the clues provided by Weick – that is, we will keep in mind the interlinkages between knowledge, social justice commitments and dialogical relationships. This will also enable a discussion of more social embedded conceptions of knowledge and knowledge utilisation that could provide a corrective to the utilitarian, economic rationalist ideology with which we began.

Social justice and knowledge

Social work knowledge, outside and inside the academy, is interwoven with social justice concerns. But what is meant by social justice here and might count as 'just knowledge'? Before proceeding we will briefly reflect on these questions because the ways in which they are answered has substantial implications for knowledge production and utilisation.

Today, discussion about social justice is common in policy discourse (Brennan and Naidoo, 2008). This is partly because, as Brennan and Naidoo (2008) noted it tends to add 'a feel good flavour ... that can cover up the absence of precise meaning' (287). On the other hand, according to McArthur (2014), it is arguable that the power of social justice lies precisely in its remaining a ' "wicked concept", which we must understand in a rigorously messy sort of way' (p. 1). This helpfully turns the deep-

seated uncertainties and contests about social justice into something of a virtue. But it also calls upon us to apply a measure of clarity and rigour to the 'messiness'.

Social justice has conventionally been discussed in terms of the *distribution* of resources and benefits (Ellison, 2016). The most familiar reading of resources and benefits here relates to material goods and financial benefits, but these terms can be interpreted much more broadly. In a knowledge economy universities can be seen as central protagonists in some of the relevant distributions. As knowledge becomes more and more recognised globally as a form of wealth and power, universities' authority to create, legitimate and share knowledge becomes an increasingly pivotal force in the struggle for distributive justice (McArthur, 2014).

Rawls (1971) offered an influential understanding of distributive justice based on fairness, which considers how goods and services should be distributed when people have different access to social structures and power. A Rawlsian perspective of justice is built on a contractarian framework that assumes people share a mutual interest in laws that prevent one person's interests from dominating another's. For many years, Rawls' work has been central to social work discourse on social justice (Carlson et al., 2016), However, recently, social work scholars have begun to question the adequacy of Rawls' philosophical and political grounding (Banerjee, 2011) and looked to other complementary and competing perspectives on justice. For example, a number of social workers have begun to adopt the capabilities approach as a 'globally relevant social justice framework' (Carlson et al., 2016, p. 269). The capabilities approach views individual and social well-being in terms of people's capability to engage in the functions required for a rich and meaningful life. Sen (2009) argued it is important to look at the differential resources that people in different contexts, and who are subject to different personal, social and environmental characteristics, require to achieve the same capabilities. This broad framework can have quite radical implications – in crude terms pushing us from focussing on a threshold 'safety net' that protects the interest of the least well-off towards putting an emphasis on how resources might be used to provide people with a more equal chance of actually pursuing a life that is valuable to them.

Other social work scholars have looked at accounts of social justice that transcend the distributive paradigm (see for example, Shaw, 2016; Craig, 2002; Orme, 2002) including, most notably, the multi-dimensional concept of justice developed by Nancy Fraser (1996, 2013). Fraser has illuminated how social justice depends not only upon the *distribution* of goods but also on the patterns of *recognition* and *participation* in society (1996, 2013). Someone can be systematically disadvantaged, and substantially so, if their identity is not recognised or valued and/or if they do not have a meaningful chance to help construct the structures and cultures from within which they pursue their lives. These conceptions of social justice have clear relevance to the day-to-day business of social work (Hölscher, 2012; Garrett, 2013). Furthermore they have fundamental implications for the nature of social work research and knowledge that we will turn to next.

Each of these accounts of social justice challenges the utilitarianism that some fear 'has captured the university' today (Liu, 2017, p. 107). Utilitarianism, in this broad sense, is roughly a fixation with 'maximising outputs' without regard to who gets what. Utilitarianism structures knowledge as a 'tool' denoting an instrumental purpose judged in terms of its utility (Buchman, 1985, p. 156). Wherever this presupposition exists it needs to be challenged on two grounds: first, research quality clearly has meaning which, at least in part, is independent from the economic effects of research products - 'research can be poor quality, costly, mistaken in its conclusions or the implications drawn from the data, and used to justify a predetermined course of action' (Gough, 2004, cited in Holzer et al., 2007, p. 5); second, even when focusing on the value of 'research outcomes' we need to qualify the weight given to overall utility by justice considerations. Whilst Liu's (2017) asserts that 'universities are now largely instruments of economic utility', she also takes a hopeful perspective – just as we are seeking to - suggesting that 'a more hospitable coexistence may be possible' between economic and humanistic concerns in higher education (p. 107) if humanistic values are viewed as the primary ends of higher education and economic values as the supporting ends (also see Bulaitis, 2017, for a similar argument).

Social work's rootedness in, and evolving approaches to, social justice thus has multiple implications for conceiving of how social work research and knowledge (and arguably HE more broadly) might help to advance human and social development rather than merely be governed by the principle of utility maximisation or, even more crudely, judged through the lens of its 'profitability' to the university or others. There are, of course, the very important questions about distribution – not only about how university knowledge is distributed but about how well those research lessons that seem to carry demonstrable benefits for the disadvantaged (i.e. that might help to rectify injustices) are utilised (Ellison, 2016; Gaventa and Bivens, 2014). But, in addition to these there are crucial questions about the role of social justice in the very constitution of knowledge – in the ways in which research is framed, conducted, co-produced and shared. Given that key dimensions of social justice entail processes of recognition and participation then 'just knowledge' cannot be (wholly) viewed as an impersonal instrumental product. This is why we began with Weick's 'guilty knowledge' as a possible exemplar for research knowledge as well as professional knowledge – that is, because it arises from and embodies relationships oriented by justice.

These intimate linkages between knowledge and justice are crystallised in Miranda Fricker's work on 'epistemic justice' (Fricker, 2007) which highlights pervasive inequalities both in relation to who is listened to or viewed as 'credible knowers' (testimonial injustice) and in relation to which groups of people are in a position to participate in the practices of meaning-making (hermeneutical injustice). In other words, moving towards a knowledge society motivated by social justice, rather than simply by profitability, requires us to think not only about the distribution and application of research knowledge but also about who is included or excluded in the relevant processes of knowledge production and exchange.

Knowledge production as a democratic process

Is it feasible to aim for a more inclusive knowledge society? In most contemporary settings, research and knowledge production are highly hierarchical affairs, often taking place in competitive environments in which one approach or researcher produces the "best" knowledge on behalf of others

(Gaventa and Bivens, 2014, p. 160-161). A hierarchical approach to research is positively advocated in evidence-based practice, which has become the dominant paradigm in health and social care today (Estabrooks et al., 2008). Evidence-based practice traditionally ranks research according to hierarchies of evidence with the core criterion being methodological rigour (using particular paradigm specific notions of what counts as rigour). Systematic reviews, sitting at the top of the hierarchy, are viewed as providing the highest levels or gold standard of evidence, followed next by randomised controlled trials (RCTs) (Evans, 2003; Sackett et al., 1996), while qualitative participatory action research resides at the bottom (Glasby and Beresford, 2006).

According to Weiler (2009), 'hierarchies are the quintessential manifestation of power' (p. 2). In this case they signify 'whose knowledge matters', and whose does not, regardless of how pertinent the questions being asked are to society or how important the resulting insights might be to diverse individuals or communities (Weiler, 2009, p. 7). Highlighting the relationship of 'reciprocal legitimation' between power and knowledge, Weiler (2009) has argued there is frequently a lack of critical examination of the power structures inherent in knowledge development - structures which subordinate and devalue certain forms of knowledge. This means, as Nandy (2000) has argued, there is a need for universities 'to act as sources of skepticism toward the victorious systems of knowledge, as the means of recovering and transmitting knowledge that has been cornered, marginalised or even defeated' (p. 118). This cannot involve the relaxation of a concern with rigour but rather entails giving due weight to the neglected dimensions and conceptions of rigour that have been developed in 'outer science' (e.g. in qualitative data analysis (BMJ, 2016)). Gaventa and Bivens (2014) refer to this as a process of 'cognitive justice', arguing that to produce democratic knowledge requires a *democratic process,* in which 'the research process is itself a form of giving voice, of challenging power relationships, and of breaking down the dichotomies of the researcher and the researched' (p. 169). There are striking parallels here with long established currents within the evaluation field including, for example, House and Howe's (2000) advocacy of 'deliberative democratic evaluation' which sees inclusion and dialogue as central to the determination of what is valuable.

Many authors have highlighted the importance of methodology in determining the capacity of research to deconstruct power and promote social justice (Chenail 2009; Evans-Agnew et al., 2013; Mack 2010; Sanon et al., 2014). Participatory and co-operative approaches (see for example Ampofo and Asiedu, 2012; Abah et al., 2009; Wheeler, 2009) to constructing knowledge have been found to be particularly suited to promoting social justice and social change (Gaventa and Bivens, 2014). Lorenzetti (2013) also emphasised the need for qualitative research approaches that enable people to share their stories in ways that are meaningful and empowering to them. Yet these approaches, despite their social value, are placed at the bottom of the evidence-based practice hierarchy. Thus, the very research that promotes inclusive citizenship, accountability and participation, and that questions how knowledge is produced and whose voices and agendas are important (Gaventa and Bivens, 2014), is afforded less value and legitimacy by the dominant structures that currently govern and evaluate the production of research knowledge. In other words those who wish to encourage knowledge production as a democratic process that contributes to social justice need to be prepared to challenge and, where appropriate, erode these dominant structures.

There are some reasons to be optimistic here. Webb (2002) observed that differences within the evidence-based movement about what counts as evidence are beginning to emerge. For example, Trinder and Reynolds (2000) usefully distinguished between *experimental* and *pragmatic* approaches to evidence- based practice in social work. Proponents of the pragmatic approach argue that the strict adoption of RCTs as the gold standard for EBP is inappropriate to the complex social and emotional problems faced by social work (Webb, 2002). Rather than rejecting the idea of evidence-based practice *per se*, Gredig (2005) argued for a 'reformulated concept' (p. 173) of evidence-based practice in social work that moves beyond a narrow notion of evidence and a model of linear transfer from research to practice. In a similar vein, Sommerfeld (2005) highlighted the need to develop a "third way" in social work, which transcends a simplifying conception of evidence-based practice to develop knowledge that is more flexible and transferable, and supports professionals in developing practice that is 'value-based and makes a social contribution' (p. 163). In short the social work academy has a valuable contribution to make in critiquing and extending ideas about knowledge in evidence-based practice discourses, and

championing research methodologies and approaches to knowledge production that are more democratic.

Sharing knowledge for social justice

The past few years have seen an increased focus on accountability, and a prioritisation of translation and 'impact' in relation to research outputs (Bulaitis, 2017; Frodeman, 2017), with the overarching aim of making more difference to society (Laing et al., 2018). For many researchers the institutional focus on influencing the world outside the academy has brought welcome encouragement to engage with society and may appear to be bringing universities back towards their original civic identity (Laing et al., 2018). However, as we have indicated, mainstream approaches to fostering research translation and impact often reflect an integration of business and management models (Bulaitis, 2017), and an emphasis on short-term utilitarian goals (Holmwood, 2011). In addition conventional ways of thinking about the translation of research to public action tend to construct 'research utilisation' as a linear process, and the full complexity of the knowledge utilisation process, and the associated interactions and relationships through which knowledge is 'exchanged', have remained underexplored (Heinsch, 2017). This has been observed as a particular issue in healthcare, where Jacobson (2007) observed that models and theories of knowledge translation 'have grown more grounded and utilitarian' and subsequently, more 'prescriptive and cookbook-like in form and content' (p. 119). Several authors have highlighted the technical-instrumental and linear focus of models of knowledge translation in healthcare, which they argue, fail to capture the complex relationships between those who research, and those whose lives are the objects of that research (Gaventa and Bivens, 2014; Kitson et al., 2018; Murphy and Farfard, 2012).

This utilitarian emphasis arguably underpins the entire 'impact agenda'. According to Frodeman (2017), modern culture, including university life, has embraced a 'productionist metaphysics': viewed in this context, research 'does no good' unless it issues in some measurable external 'stuff' (Frodeman, 2017, p4). The costs and risks of this emphasis – to academic integrity and researcher-researched relationships - are increasingly being noted. For example, since the ability to

demonstrate impact now influences future funding and subsequent academic career progression in many countries including the UK, US and Australia (Penfield et al., 2014), researchers are going to increasing lengths to generate impact, or at least reports of impact, even at the cost of research quality (Laing et al., 2018) or of stakeholders themselves (Reed, 2016). In a recent study, academics in Australia and the UK expressed concern at feeling the need to exaggerate and embellish the future impact of their work in order to obtain funding, with some describing the process of 'promising' or predicting impact on the general public as 'charades' and 'illusions', 'virtually meaningless', or 'made up stories' (Chubb and Watermeyer, 2016). Reed (2016) also suggested that, rather than fostering two-way partnerships between researchers and the public, the impact agenda is leading to 'ill-informed and sometimes inappropriate advances by researchers' wishing to "use" stakeholders to generate impact in order to further their career. He (2016) notes, this is beginning to erode public trust in the academic community, and is 'causing more harm than good'.

Concerns have also been raised that the mechanisms currently used to assess research impact need to be reworked if they are to properly capture the value of cultural, creative or humanistic work (Bulaitis, 2017). On many current impact measures certain kinds of research which aim to raise awareness and are of longer-term conceptual use may be less likely to attract funding (Reed, 2016) than research which produces more tangible and immediate benefits (Ferguson, 2014). For example, the focus of the UK Research Excellence Framework (REF) on assessing the specific impacts of discrete projects or publications has been criticised as 'STEM-centric' as it 'misses the importance of the "wise counsel" aspects of academic service' (Bastow et al., 2014; Tinkler, 2012). This may influence the kind of research that is produced, with a reduction in 'conceptual, theoretical and critical "thorn-in-the-side" research', ultimately, 'making the research landscape less vibrant, anodyne and potentially much less useful' (Parker and von Teillingen, 2012, p. 50). Recent reviews lend weight to this assertion, finding that the impact process in the UK risks encouraging a shift against qualitative and theoretically driven methodology that is often found in socially critical educational research (Laing et al., 2018). Similarly, Colley (2014) noted that the danger of the strong focus on research reception is that we might produce what receivers want to hear, rather than robust critical social science that might challenge the receivers.

Critical social science has a long-standing concern 'with issues of power, and justice' (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2000, p. 281), such that a reduction in critical research may therefore result in less awareness and exploration of the root causes of social inequities.

More generally, the commodification of knowledge risks increasing the distance between researchers and 'research users'. Seeing research in commercial terms can require that it be made artificially scarce to ensure its continued value (Jessop, 2002, p.4). Today, access to academic knowledge often depends on payment in the form of royalties and license fees (Jessop, 2002), thereby excluding a significant proportion of society from benefiting from it. In *The Death of Public Knowledge*, Davis (2017) argues for the value and importance of shared, publicly accessible knowledge, noting that the erosion of this has worrying outcomes for democracy. While Davis' focus is on the most visible forms of public education, such as public service broadcasting and the network of public libraries, there are many strong parallels with the commodification and subsequent restriction of academic knowledge. A buyer-seller relationship between researchers and 'users' is not conducive to the enhancement of social justice or to the development of genuine 'knowledge societies' (UNESCO, 2005).

However currents of work within social work and the wider academy are countering these dominant tendencies. Gaventa and Bivens (2014) argue that critical knowledge involves changing the relationships of the researchers to their subjects (Gaventa and Bivens, 2014, p. 160). In these reworked relationships the researcher can play multiple roles including facilitator, critical friend, translator, interlocutor, or intellectual (Benequista and Wheeler, 2012). In Gaventa and Bivens (2014) study researchers began to see themselves as political actors who are deeply embedded within struggles for social justice, especially when these struggles are in the epistemic and cognitive domains (p. 169). Walter and colleagues (2004) too, countered simplistic notions of research as a 'tool' for practice, emphasising the importance of exploring models of research use that are inclusive of practitioners and involve collaborative efforts.

Co-operative approaches to research - in which researchers and 'users' work in partnership to co-produce and implement knowledge for practice (Needham and Carr, 2012) - have much to offer from

a social justice perspective. These approaches cannot be advocated without some caution. They present challenges for evidence-based practice, precisely because they limit the amount of control that researchers can have over the research process, and increase the risk that evidence becomes less academically robust, compared with the intentions of its original framework (Payne, 2001, p. 142). When research is jointly created and interpreted, it becomes absorbed into, and emulsified with, other knowledge sources, like practice wisdom, experience, and lay knowledge (Trevithick, 2008). Gredig and Sommerfeld (2008) described this as a process of *hybridisation*, in which different forms of researcher and user knowledge combine to form a 'third sphere' of knowledge. Indeed Collins' (2010) work on tacit and explicit knowledge illustrates the dangers of rigid distinctions between, and polarised debates about, scientific and 'lay' knowledge. His analyses help show how tacit knowledge forms a common feature of all human knowing and doing, including scientific enquiry. Of course these processes of finding common ground between and combining knowledge sources requires researchers to share power over, and 'ownership' of, knowledge with users and their communities (Needham and Carr, 2012), which is extremely challenging in a culture that places such status on the ownership of knowledge and the desire for control (Morley and Ife, 2002). As Brennan and Naidoo (2008) noted, there are tensions between traditional views of universities as sites of disinterested scholarly activity and more recent calls for academics to act in roles such as public activists and partners. Hence advocating for social justice inspired forms of knowledge production and utilisation inevitably creates some dilemmas for researchers. However, without attempts at genuine partnership, Needham and Carr (2012) argued that co-operative processes 'risk simply reproducing existing power relationships between researchers and users'.

Morley and Ife (2002), working within the social work academy, have highlighted that, if people are separated from constructing knowledge about themselves, they lose the sense of responsibility that goes with this knowledge. Instead, knowledge is disseminated to them by the dominant power, and that power is positioned as the locus of 'moral responsibility' (Morley and Ife, 2002, p. 72). Gubrium (2016) referred to this as an issue of human rights, one that raises questions about 'who has the right to tell society what is good and what is right' (p. 15). It is on this moral basis, he

observes, that ‘border crossings’ into conventional science and service provision are increasingly being undertaken by non-professionals in what has been termed the ‘user movement’. In its most ideal form, this border crossing may lead to the kind of approach advocated by Morley and Ife (2002), in which people name the world together in a dialogue that ‘cannot possibly be learned through 'methodology' (2002, p. 74). Unfortunately, Gubrium (2016) notes that too often, the borders of expertise are fiercely guarded through legal limits and definitions designating who is and is not ‘expertly professional’ (p. 14). The kind of dialogue Morley and Ife (2002) espouse requires humility, a ‘letting go’ of the need to control and surrendering to uncertainly, and it is based in a fundamental belief that ‘what is important is that we are human and that this lived experience is valued above all else’ (Morley and Ife, 2002, p. 70). This is aptly reflected in Lorenzetti’s (2013) description of her ‘journey’ of becoming an activist social work researcher:

> ‘It is not a separate self now called ‘‘an academic’’ but an extension of one’s role as someone invested in human rights, social change, and collective well-being. It is a journey with no particular end point, but many opportunities to reflect, grow, and share one’s learnings with others. Developing this new role requires humility and an open mind as well as a confidence in the value of everything that exists outside of this role’ (p. 456).

Morley and Ife (2002) call for social work to meet human need at a deeper, more effective level, by embracing its ‘love of humanity’. There are strong echoes here of Weick’s ‘guilty knowledge’ with which we began. The ‘love of humanity’ described by Morley and Ife (2002) is arguably key to challenging the individualist, utilitarian focus of the knowledge economy, and encouraging a more inclusive knowledge society.

Our emphasis in this section has been on the implications of the social justice dimensions of *recognition* and *participation* for reconfiguring knowledge utilisation assumptions and practices. But we should also reiterate that the dimension of *distribution* is important in this regard. The knowledge economy has raised the commercial value of certain forms of knowledge—but not all. Some disciplines, particularly those in the social and human services, are becoming marginalised because their knowledge

does not lead to high levels of commercialisation and profit (Gaventa and Bivens, 2014, p. 151). Consequently, there is also less focus on translating the knowledge from these disciplines into policy and practice, even where it has strong empirical support (McMillin, 2014). As McMillin (2014) noted, these disciplines are "under the radar" to the point where the slow or non-existent dissemination of effective social services and programs is not even identified as a problem. Brekke and colleagues (2007) pointed to empirically well-supported psychosocial interventions reaching less than 10% of one targeted, eligible population diagnosed with schizophrenia, with only 30% receiving any intervention at all irrespective of the level of empirical support for it.

Thus, finally, social justice can have implications for *which* research is translated into practice. For example, Larkin (2007), operating from a distributive paradigm, has made a case for saying translation initiatives should prioritise interventions according to their likelihood of preventing morbidity and mortality. But Ellison (2016), notes the incompleteness of this perspective arguing that a more just approach would also entail looking at how all science is practiced and applied, and what strategies are needed to bring marginalised people into the research folds and ensure that its advances are accessible to everyone. One suggestion for achieving this has been put forward by Rogers (2012), who proposed an anti-oppressive framework for social work, that conceptualises potentially oppressive manifestations of power in the research relationship and opportunities for meaningful inclusion of service user perspectives in the research process. He emphasised the need to acknowledge that an anti-oppressive approach is not exclusive to social work research, noting that a recent review of the impact of service user involvement in health and social care research had identified examples of clinical trials that had successfully included service users in the research, leading to significant improvements to both design and outcomes (Rogers, 2012).

Social work (along with related currents of research) clearly has something to offer in counterbalancing current discourses about research in the knowledge economy. However, in order to make the fullest contribution to this discussion, the profession must both acknowledge and build upon its deep and expansive knowledge about human relationships; the guilty knowledge that forms the

'heartlines' of the profession (Weick, 1999). This necessarily implies the need for a stronger connection between research and practice in social work, because social work knowledge is 'grounded in … the immediacy of human experience and a poignant appreciation of the painful aspects of daily living' (Weick, 1999, p. 327). Adopting an approach to knowledge production and utilisation that is animated by multi-dimensional conceptions of social justice would, we suggest, enable social work academics - and universities more broadly - to make effective use of all available epistemic resources, keep university research agendas properly integrated with their civic and educative missions, and in so doing help to build a more inclusive knowledge society.

Conclusion

We have sought to set out a constructive story about the potential for social work values, especially a social justice orientation, to help shift the centre of gravity of university knowledge production and utilisation. The guiding principle of such a reorientation would be to resist lazy assumptions about, and the institutional structures that promote, a 'profit-centred' model of the Higher Education knowledge economy. As we have indicated there are many constructive academic voices who can be appealed to in this process, arising from colleagues who are motivated both by human need and by concerns with rigour. It is also possible to produce a clear economic rationale for such a call – because poorly formed and/or neglected epistemic resources amount to a colossal waste. Furthermore it may be that universities are in danger of being laggards in this respect. There are signs within wider socio-economic debate that some of the simplistic assumptions of narrow 'profit-centred' models of economic thinking need re-thinking. As Frodeman (2017) has noted, 'the cracks … are becoming apparent'; the limits to the amount of happiness that can be obtained through economic growth and the acquisition of material goods have become obvious, especially in light of other, declining social indicators. There are, he has argued, 'multiple bottom lines' and 'economic growth can come at the cost of other values' (Frodeman, 2017, p. 4). These sentiments are echoed and developed in Mazzucato's (2018) recent call for a reformed economic system – a system in which 'value creation' rather than 'value extraction' is centre stage. These arguments are particularly apposite to the university sector given its multiple 'value

creating' missions and should help academic researchers to acknowledge, contribute to and celebrate the rich array of knowledges and ends that universities serve.

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